

## German General's Memoirs Call Bormann a Spy for the Soviet

By HENRY RAYMONT

A manuscript described as the memoirs of Gen. Reinhard Gehlen, former head of the West German intelligence service, asserts that Martin Bormann, Hitler's top lieutenant, was a Soviet agent during World War II.

It also says that after the war Bormann became an advisor on German policy in the Soviet Union and that he died there less than three years ago.

These assertions about the Nazi leader who was last seen leaving Hitler's bunker in Berlin in 1945, are contained in a forthcoming book that General Gehlen is said to have written since his retirement in 1968.

The book is reported to be commanding offers approaching \$1-million for world publication rights, following at least six months of secret negotiations that in themselves resemble an episode of international intrigue.

The memoirs discount previous accounts of Bormann's fate, which presumed him either to have died outside Hitler's bunker in Berlin or to be hiding in South America.

In fact, the memoirs say, as the Russians closed in on the bunker, the Nazi leader crossed their lines and gained sanctuary in the Soviet Union. The information is attributed to a series of "unimpeachable" reports, presumably from General Gehlen's agents in the Soviet Union. The last report, which brought word of the death, came in 1969.

The account of Bormann's double role is one of many details of East-West intrigue in the reminiscences of General Gehlen, who was chief intelligence officer of the Wehrmacht on the Russian front and was recruited after the war by United States intelligence. He eventually became director of the Bundes-Nachrichten-Dienst, West Germany's secret service.

The existence of the memoirs—and negotiations for their sale by a small West German publishing house—became known here during the last few days as an outline and portions of the text were obtained from several publishing sources.

An announcement is expected this week that bids for the world rights to the manuscript outside Germany have been made by the World Publishing Company, a subsidiary of the Times Mirror Company of Los Angeles, and Avon Books, a paperback publisher owned by the Hearst Corporation. The publishing house of William Collins of London is also known to have offered \$100,000 for the

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The announcement would be the first public acknowledgment of the existence of the Gehlen memoirs and the negotiations, which have included secret trips by United States and British publishers to Germany and an almost clandestine typesetting operation by the conservative Hamburg newspaper Die Welt, which plans to begin serializing the book on Sept. 10.



Reinhard Gehlen, former West German intelligence chief, in World War II.

According to information assembled from publishers here and in West Germany, the Gehlen memoirs were first offered for sale early this year by Volker Hansen, director of Hass & Kochler, a small, 182-year-old publishing house in Mainz known for books on military subjects. Mr. Hansen, whose father was a German intelligence officer during World War II, said he held power of attorney for General Gehlen.

Over the last three months several United States and British publishers went to Mainz, where they were allowed to see as many as three chapters of the 12-chapter manuscript. Requests to visit General Gehlen at his home in Bavaria were turned down on the ground that he wished to remain secluded during the negotiations. However, the publishers were told the general intended to make public appearances to promote the book after its publication.

Mr. Hansen's refusal to disclose the full text combined with the unavailability of its author led to some speculation about whether the memoirs had actually been written by General Gehlen.

But publishing sources, both here and in West Germany, assert that they have confirmed the reliability of the material through people close to the intelligence community of both countries.

Martin P. Levin, chairman of the board of World Publishing, said: "We are totally convinced that the memoirs are authentic. We are equally convinced that they will create an international sensation."

Mr. Levin said the authenticity of the manuscript had been verified by Peter Ritner, World's chief editor, with the help of Georg Bailey, an author formerly connected with United States military intelligence in Germany, when the two men visited Mainz late last month.

Two years ago, Mr. Ritner, then working for the Macmillan Company, was the editor of Albert Speer's "Inside the Third Reich," a best seller that is said to have contributed to General Gehlen's decision to issue his own memoirs.

The report that the general wrote a book was especially surprising because of his legendary record of anonymity. For years he shunned interviews and public statements, despite a reputation as the man who built West Germany's intelligence apparatus into the world's most effective anti-Communist espionage network.

General Gehlen, who made his reputation as an analyst of Soviet strategy on the Russian front, went underground as the war ended to surrender with his entire staff to Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army with an offer to cooperate with the victors.

In 1947, the newly created Central Intelligence Agency authorized him to establish a full-scale German intelligence organization, which he staffed largely with professionals from the disbanded S.S. security service and the Wehrmacht intelligence agencies.

People who say they are familiar with the 69-year-old general's thinking say fear of reprisals against his family and a distaste to have his views used in internal West German political controversies explain his continued reluctance to receive visitors.

If this has indeed been General Gehlen's attitude, information about the manuscript that became available in recent days indicates a drastic change. For in addition to describing wartime and later intelligence operations, it contains a detailed analysis of Soviet political and military goals for the next two decades as well as an urgent plea for a Western military buildup to contain Communist expansion.

The argument for a tougher policy of containment suggests that the publication of the memoirs is certain to be welcomed by the foes of West German Chancellor Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik, his policy to improve relations with the Soviet bloc.

This is the reason given by German publishing sources why the German newspaper serial rights were acquired by Die Welt, whose owner, Axel Springer, is an influential critic of the Brandt government. Die Welt is reported to have paid \$250,000 for the serial rights.

Rüdiger Freiherr von Wechmar, Chancellor Brandt's spokesman, said in an interview from Bonn yesterday that the Government had not been aware of the impending serialization of the Gehlen memoirs. However, he said that high officials had known about the existence of "an alleged Gehlen manuscript" and were investigating whether there had been any violation of laws restraining former civil servants from revealing state secrets.

The plan to rush the manuscript into print coincided with the publication of a critical Gehlen biography written by Heinz Höhne, an editor of the Hamburg weekly news magazine Der Spiegel, which supports Chancellor Brandt. The Höhne book will be issued in Germany on Sept. 19, and an English translation is to be published here next year by Coward, McCann, Geoghegan.

In offering the book by Gehlen to prospective foreign publishers, Mr. Hansen is understood to have made the point that neither Mr. Höhne nor the author of another forthcoming Gehlen biography, E. H. Cookridge, have interviewed the former intelligence chief nor seen his memoirs.

A portion of the text of the memoirs, including the account of the Bormann case, was distributed by Mr. Hansen as evidence that General Gehlen's book would contain important and hitherto unpublished materials.

The memoirs say that the revelations about Bormann, the man Hitler named as his successor, "offer the key to one of the most enigmatic cases of our century."

The author says that he first heard suspicions voiced about Bormann in a private conversation in 1941 with Adm. Wilhelm Canaris, head of the Nazi counter-espionage service, who was executed for his role in the July, 1944, plot to assassinate Hitler.

According to the memoirs, although Bormann was believed to have ties to Die Rote Kapelle, a famous Soviet espionage cell in Nazi Germany, the Nazi leader was never placed under surveillance for fear that he would use his influence with Hitler to destroy the intelligence service.